



Beloved sons and daughters in Christ, our Peace and our Joy!

In 2013, in his last Christmas message, Bishop Mael wrote: “In order to free man and creation, the Glory of the Word descends into the darkness of the fallen world from the inaccessible heights of His uncreated nature. God’s infinite mercy strips itself of its power and annihilates itself out of love for His creation. [...] Like the Shepherds and the Wise men, we are invited to adore the perfect humility of a God who, from this point on, no longer reveals Himself at the Almighty of the Old Alliance, but as Love made man.”

Love made man! It’s hard for us to grasp the meaning of these words. But do we have to try to understand? “We only see rightly with the heart. Essentials are invisible to the naked eye,” said Saint-Exupéry. What is essential is invisible to our human understanding. To grasp the mystery of Life and Love is only possible with the heart. In his message, Bishop Mael invites us to marvel like children, because something utterly unbelievable took place in the history of mankind, and in each and every one’s personal history: “In the grotto, inaccessible to the proud, the Child God, the Child King of the universe, the Child High Priest and Source of Life, comes down to us.”

The heart tells us much more than words. When the heart is enraptured, a luminous silence transfigures our emotions and feelings. A profound peace overwhelms us through the door of the heart. That is why Bishop Mael also said to us: “The Feast of the Nativity is not a noisy feast. No loud clamor rises up in the starry night of mad hope. In the luminous silence of the manger, all humanity is called upon to contemplate the mystery of the Incarnation.”

Each Christmas night is like an eternal and unceasingly renewed instant of the birth of Love made man. Each year we are called upon to contemplate this theophany that exceeds our intelligence. Our venerable Father also

wrote: “Like the immobile nativity figures of our manger scenes, the entire universe is awestruck by this astonishing miracle: God has become man so that man can become God!” And he goes on to say: “The angels sing God’s glory, and one of them invites men to rejoice as he reveals to them the fulfillment of the promise: ‘Do not be afraid, for behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy which will be to all people. For there is born to you this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord’ (Lk 2:10-11)”.

Awe is always an answer to expectation. It is not the manifestation of mere feeling, but an encounter, a communion with love hidden in the hollow of this instant. It is a divine answer to our fallen humanity. That is why Bishop Mael quoted this passage of Saint Gregory of Nyssa: “Sick, our nature asked to be healed; fallen, to be lifted up; dead, to be resurrected. Since we had lost the possession of good, it had to be given back to us. Shut up in darkness, they all but brought us light; captives, we awaited a savior; prisoners, rescue; slaves, a liberator. Were these reasons unimportant? Did they not deserve to move God to the point of making Him come down to visit our human nature, since mankind was found in such a miserable and unhappy state?” (Saint Gregory of Nyssa, Catechetical Discourse 15)

Bishop Mael has once more told us of his own amazement, one that he always was able to maintain. There is no true faith without having a child’s heart. May Christmas awaken in each one of us the inner gaze where the manger radiates the Light of the Child Jesus!

Let us leave the care of ending this message with Bishop Mael: “O holy Joy of Christmas! May it fill our suffering hearts! ... May it dry our weeping eyes! May it illuminate our searching souls!” (Lettres de Pierre, Vol III)

“Let us rejoice, for the time of grace has arrived. It is no longer the angels who announce the Good News, but we Christians, so that the world may believe!”

May you all have a Merry and a Holy Christmas!

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